

## Early Tax Records of Sweden, part 2 (1599 - 1635)

By Geoffrey Fröberg Morris AG®

### Introduction

This class is a continuation of the Early Tax Records of Sweden, part 1 (1535 – 1577). In this presentation, we will discuss the background, payment amounts, and record accessibility for 6 more tax records that were collected between 1599 to 1635.

### 7. Hjälpsskatterna 1599 and 1601

The word *Hjälpsskatterna* is translated literally as “Help taxes.” The 1599 tax was also known as *Femtiondedelsskatten* (1/50<sup>th</sup> tax) which equals 2% an individual’s wealth. The tax was repeated in 1601 with the inclusion of horses, oxen, and cows that were included in the assessment. These taxes were collected to help pay for the military, especially the wages of military personnel. In some areas, the tax collectors required the tax in 1600 and 1602 / 1603.

#### Access

Riksarkivet: <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/landskapshandlingar>. Choose the province (*Landskap*) and enter 1599 or 1601 to see what records are available.

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: Search the FamilySearch Catalog by the name of the county, then find the topic taxation, and then look for the **Landskapshandlingar 1541/42 (or close) – 1633/35 (or close)** created by the *Kammarkollegium*. Find the year you need and click camera icon to the side of the DGS number.

### 8. Folkhjälpén 1606

In September of 1605, the Swedish army had a devastating defeat against the Poles and Lithuanians at the battle of Krichholm in Salaspils, Latvia. King Charles IX returned with his troops to Stockholm for reinforcements and funding. The government obligated every able-bodied person between the ages of 16 – 60 years old to pay a monthly fee of one öre per month to support war efforts. The tax was collected between from January 1606 – January 1607. It was referred to as *Enöreshjälpén* which translates directly as “the one öre’s help” and was also known as *folkhjälpén* meaning the people’s help.

#### Access

Riksarkivet: <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/landskapshandlingar>. Choose the province (*Landskap*) and enter 1606 to see what records are available.

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: Search the FamilySearch Catalog by the name of the county, then find the topic taxation, and then look for the **Landskapshandlingar 1541/42 (or close) – 1633/35 (or close)** created by the *Kammarkollegium*. Find the year you need and click camera icon to the side of the DGS number.

## 9. Hjonelagspenningarna 1609 – 1611

The government stopped collection of the *Folkhjälpen* or *Enöreshjälpen* in January of 1607, but the war didn't stop. A similar tax was needed again in 1609. This time the government decided to tax every married couple (*Hjonelag*) for six *mark*, so it was called the *Hjonelagspenningar* tax. Although the focus was on married couples, they also taxed widowers four *mark*, widows two *mark*, and single people over the age of 15 years old one *mark*. The tax was collected for three years until Charles IX died in 1611.

### Access

Riksarkivet: <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/landskapshandlingar>. Choose the province (*Landskap*) and enter 1609, 1610, or 1611 to see what records are available.

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: Search the FamilySearch Catalog by the name of the county, then find the topic taxation, and then look for the **Landskapshandlingar 1541/42 (or close) – 1633/35 (or close)** created by the *Kammarkollegium*. Find the year you need and click camera icon to the side of the DGS number.

## 10. Älvsborgs lösen 1613 – 1618 (- 1623)

In 1607 King Charles IX declared himself “king of the Lapps in Nordland” and started collecting taxes in Norwegian territory. King Christian IV of Denmark protested by declaring war on Sweden in April 1611. In 1612 the Danes captured two fortresses, Gullberg and Älvsborgs fortress the latter of which was a major set-back to Sweden as it cut off access to their only western port for trade. The peace of Knäred was signed in 1613 with a ransom of 1 million *riksdaler* to be paid in silver paid in four installments in exchange for the fortresses, and other territory captured by the Danes. Unlike the previous *Älvsborgs lösen*, the government imposed a flat tax regardless of the individual's ability to pay it. Craftsmen paid four *riksdaler*. Farmers and cavalymen paid two *riksdaler*. Wives, widowed individuals, laborers, and sons of farmers paid six *mark*. Maids and daughters of farmers paid three *mark*. Tenant farmers living on lands owned by the nobility, servants of the nobility, and people under 15 years old or over 70 were exempt, as were poor or sick. Unlike the earlier tax records, *Älvsborgs lösen 1613* shows people of lower social standing such as house servants, renters, and cottagers. The tax was paid on an annual basis for 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, and 1617. Another term was obligated in 1618 but the collection went poorly so the tax was collected over 1619 – 1621. There are 85 volumes that were created for this tax.

### Access

Riksarkivet: Go to <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/alvsborgs-losen> and choose **Älvsborgslösen 1613** from the dropdown menu. Click **Sök** and then choose the province by clicking on the **Bild** icon.

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: Go to

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/496390?availability=Family%20History%20Library> and then scroll down to find the province that you need.

## 11. Boskapshjälpen 1620 – 1641

In the spring of 1620, a new tax was imposed. The purpose was to pay national debts and fund national defense. Unlike previous taxes based on individuals, their property, or wealth, this one was based on their livestock. Every independent land-owning farmer, tenant farmer on lands owned by the Crown, or tenant farmer had to pay a certain amount of *mark*, or *öre* for 16 types of livestock from horses, oxen, cows, sheep, goats, pigs of different ages and sexes, and grain. Tenant farmers whose land belong to the nobility paid half the amounts. Cavalrymen and soldiers did not have to pay for their horses, but the farmer who owned the horse did. If the farmer was especially poor, then the tax was reduced or even waived depending on their wealth. The pastor, local sheriff, and constables were encouraged to take inventory immediately upon announcement and were accountable for correct accounting. If a farmer hid livestock and the lie was discovered, then the tax amount was doubled. The local tax collector was obligated to create the records. Three copies of each list were created, one to the national economics office (*Kammarkollegium*), another to the district Sheriff, and the last copy was kept by the tax collector. The volumes for this tax require just over 49 feet of shelf space at the national archive.

### Access

Riksarkivet: Go to <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/amnesomrade?postid=Arkis+A0974854-9AB7-11D5-A700-0002440207BB&infosida=amnesomrade-skatter&flik=1> and click on the name of the province. Then click on the image icon next to the year and *härad* you need. Finally, search for the parish of interest and then the name of the farmer and farm.

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: FamilySearch has the volumes between 1620 – 1633s or up to 1640 depending on the county. Search the FamilySearch Catalog by the name of the county, then find the topic **taxation**, and then look for the **Boskapslängder 1620 – 1633** (or other end year) created by the *Kammarkollegium*. Find the year you need and click camera icon to the side of the DGS number.

## 12. Kvarntullsmantalslängderna 1628 - 1635

In 1625 the Swedish government approved a special tax to be upon every *tunna* (160 – 185 lb.) of milled grain. The payment was a percentage of flour that was gathered by the miller and local tax collector. This tax was called the “*kvarntull*” tax (*kvarn* is mill and *tull* is an imposed fee.) As a result, people started milling their own grain at home using a hand mill. In response, parliament outlawed hand mills in 1627 which was not very practical. In 1628 a compromise was agreed upon which allowed priests and farmers to keep their hand mills in exchange for a monetary payment. The payment was 1 Swedish *mark* which was paid 3 times during a year for every member of the household who was 12 or more years old. Originally the compromise was intended for 1628 but it was carried

into 1629 in some areas. So, between 1629 and 1635 some areas resumed the *kvarntull* tax and others switched over to the fee. In 1635 parliament passed a law that the *kvarntull* tax would be paid by a monetary fee throughout the kingdom. This tax was called the *kvarntullsmantallspenningar*. It was also decided that this would be a standing tax to be gathered annually. The title *kvarntullsmantallspenningar* continued to be used in some areas. Other areas shortened the title to *kvarntullspenningar* or *mantallspenningar*. Over time the title *mantallspenningar* (which was recorded in *mantallslängder*) became the recognized title kingdom wide

### Access

Riksarkivet: See <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/arkiv/KqYNeBUQrH6d0002H087k3>

ArkivDigital: Not available

FamilySearch: FamilySearch has sporadic coverage for these tax records. Some counties have partial coverage i.e., Västernorrland (cataloged under *Mantallslängder*), while others do not have them at all. Search the FamilySearch Catalog by the name of the county, then find the topic **taxation**, and then look for the **Mantallslängder** for the years that include 1628 – 1635 created by the *Kammarkollegium*. Find the year you need and click camera icon to the side of the DGS number.

### Research Tips

1. These tax records have not been indexed into databases. You will need to search the digital images manually. After you find the right volume, it should be organized by province, härad, and parish.
2. Whether you are using Riksarkivet or the FamilySearch catalog, you will find that the catalogers did not always provide enough detail to get the desired volume.
3. In FamilySearch, most of the time there are multiple volumes on the same film. You can look for title boards to see where one starts and another ends. You will need to open each volume to find the province that you need.
4. Once you have opened a volume, look for an index of the parishes for a page number. If there is no page number, or index, find the section for the härad and then look for the parish. It helps to know names of parishes and some geography to browse the volumes.